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ABSTRACT

A third paper of the first series (Community Backgrounds of Education in the Communities Which Have been Studied) contributes to the final report of a National Study of American Indian Education and relates to Pawnee (Pawnee County), Oklahoma. Economic, social, and demographic data are presented for Indian, Negro, and "White" subgroups of the population of Pawnee City. Additionally, the historical, educational, and developmental aspects of the community are delineated. The text includes 2 maps, 3 tables, and a bibliography. (AL)

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FINAL REPORT

Community Background Reports

Pawnee, Oklahoma

Series I

No. 3

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January, 1970

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NATIONAL STUDY OF AMERICAN INDIAN EDUCATION

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The attached paper is one of a number which make up the Final Report of the National Study of American Indian Education.

This Study was conducted in 1968-69-70 with the aid of a grant from the United States Office of Education, OEC-0-8-080147-2805.

The Final Report consists of five Series of Papers:

I. Community Backgrounds of Education in the Communities Which Have Been Studied.

II. The Education of Indians in Urban Centers.

III. Assorted Papers on Indian Education--mainly technical papers of a research nature.

IV. The Education of American Indians--Substantive Papers.

V. A Survey of the Education of American Indians

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PAWNEE, OKLAHOMA

General Background

The two principal towns in Pawnee County are Pawnee City and Cleveland. Pawnee City, the County seat, occupies a site central to the County. The 1960 census population for the city of Pawnee was 2,303; Cleveland's population was 2,519. Other towns in the County have population counts considerably under 500 per community. Various physical-cultural features of Pawnee County are shown in Map I.

Approximately five per cent of the Pawnee County population is made up of Indians. Several estimates by local townspeople set the number of Indians in and around Pawnee City at 700 and the number of Negroes at 300.[1]

A short history of the development of Pawnee County is provided in an Overall Economic Development Program (for) Pawnee County (1964):

> Located in north-central Oklahoma, in what was once the famed Cherokee Outlet, Pawnee County lies approximately 96 miles northeast of Oklahoma City, 58 miles west of Tulsa and 145 miles from Wichita, Kansas. It is bordered on the north and east by the Arkansas River and in part on the south by the Cimarron River.
>
> A strip of land along the southern border of Kansas that had been ceded to the Cherokees had been set aside by the Federal Government as an outlet for the Indians of that tribe to [illegible] the buffalo hunting grounds to the west. The Cherokees had been moved from Georgia and other southeastern states over the "trail of tears" to what is now eastern Oklahoma. After the white men had destroyed the buffalo there was no longer need for the Cherokee

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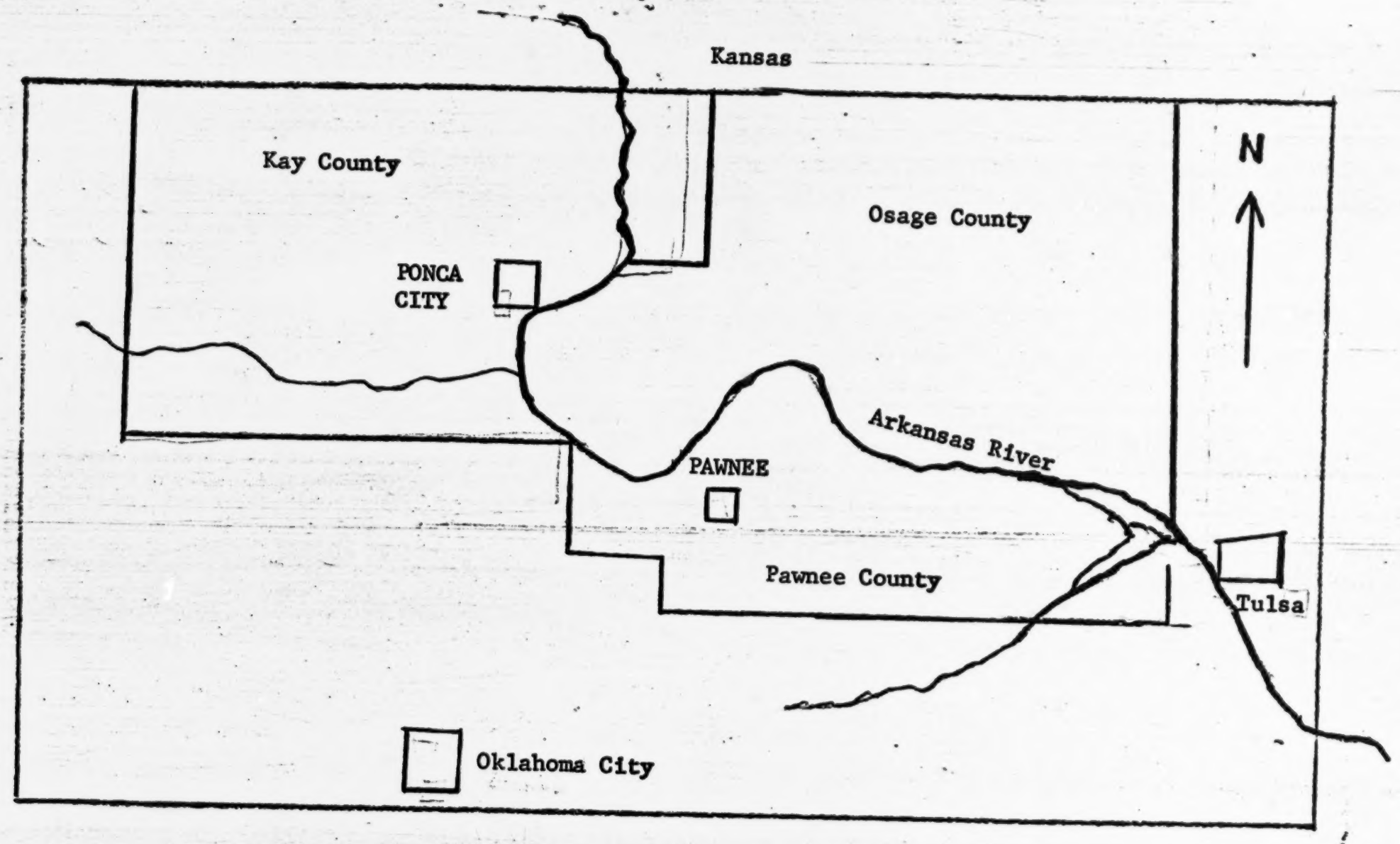
[1]The 1960 census listed an Indian population of 565 in Pawnee County or 5 per cent of the total population. It is assumed that the majority of these would be Pawnee Indians.



Map 1 - Location of PAWNEE and PONCA CITY, OKLAHOMA

Strip or Outlet. It was reacquired by the Federal Government and several Indian tribes given reservations therein.

The Pawnees were moved from their homes in Nebraska to what is now Pawnee County. The Otoes and Missouria Indians were moved to this area also and settled in Pawnee and Noble counties to be. The Indians came in the early eighteen seventies and in time were given individual allotments. The Pawnees received 160 acres each.

...The Strip was opened to White settlement on September 16, 1893, in one of a series of "runs" to settle land that had not been set aside for the Indians. The settlers could claim 160 acres. After they had lived on the land for five years and had made some improvements, they could claim ownership.

> Almost immediately after the run, townsites were laid out at Pawnee, already a settlement following the establishment of the Pawnee Indian Agency in 1875, and at Cleveland, Blackburn, Jennings, Keystone and Ralston. These became local trading centers. In the new farming communities, small settlements sprang up. Among these were Skedee, Masham, Lela, Terlton and Hallett. The first public schools were opened in 1893. By 1901 there were 64 schools and several churches. In 1900 the Santa Fe brought the first rail line to the country; other lines soon followed. In 1904 oil was discovered at Cleveland, and it became an industry second only to farming and livestock raising.... Today it still holds that position.[1]

The city of Pawnee is laid out in a grid system, occupying the bluffs and flood plains of Black Bear Creek. The entrance to Pawnee from the west on US highway 64 is attractive as the road skirts the wooded bluffs called Blue Hawk Peak. The main business district concentration is along US 64, called Harrison Street, on bench land adjacent to Black Bear Creek (see Map II). Much of the residential housing is located on "the hill" which lies south of Harrison Street. The majority of White residences are

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[1] An Overall Economic Development Program: Pawnee County, prepared by the County Program Planning and Resource Development Council, 1964.

Map 2 - PAWNEE CITY

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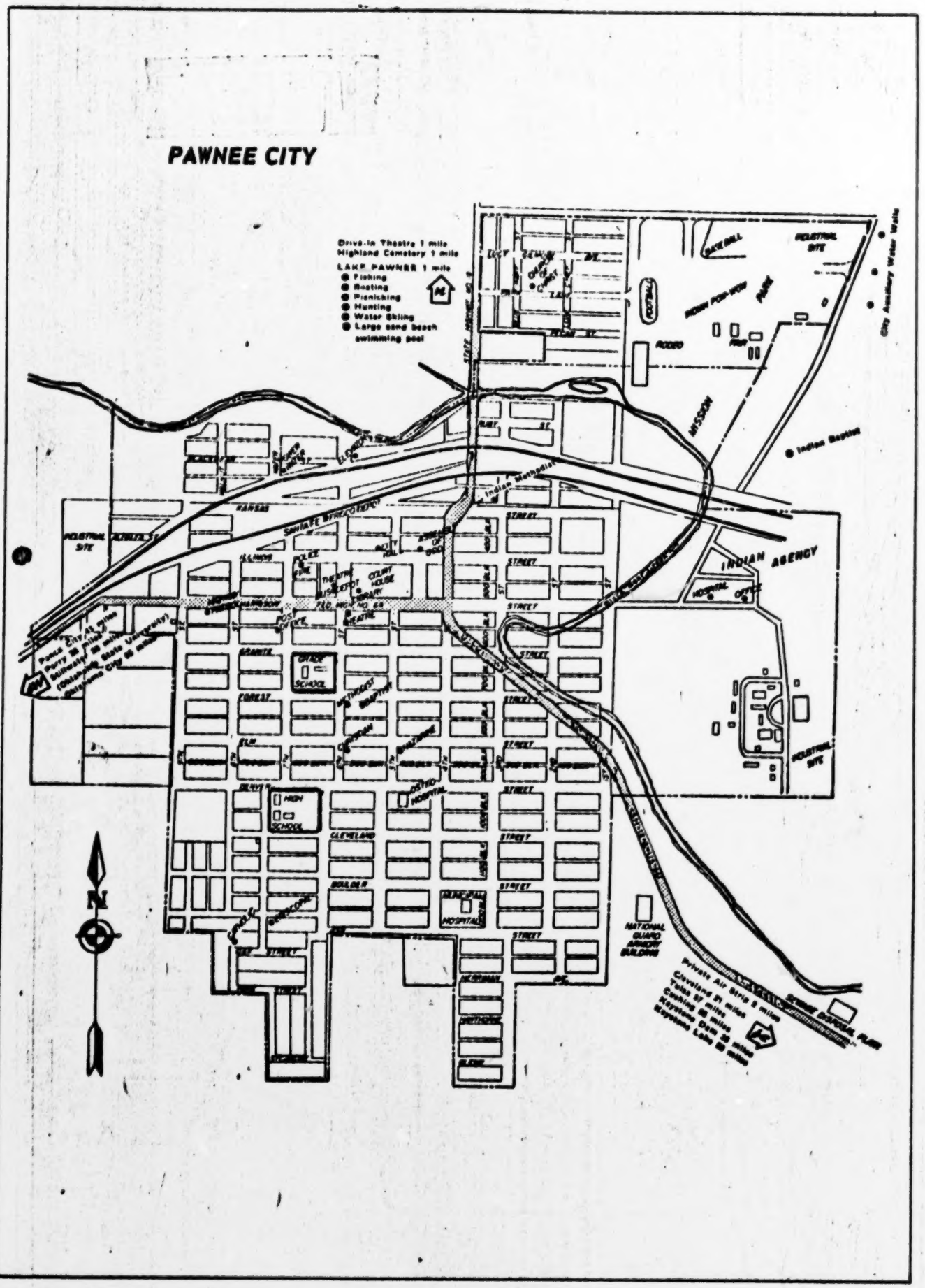

located in this section of the community. The east slope of "the hill" is called by some townspeople "colored town." Approximately 300 Negroes live in this area.

Residential homes of Indians appear to be less clustered by community section than Negro home sites. A large number of Indian homes are located north of town, east of State Highway 18. A well worn path across the county court house lawn from northeast to southwest suggests that many residents from the north section of the community walk to and from the downtown business district.

Economy

A major concern of many White leaders in Pawnee is the economic vitality of the community. Population shifts in Pawnee County have generally been more exaggerated than state-wide averages:

> Between 1950 and 1960 the population of the state increased 4.3 per cent. During the same interval Pawnee County lost 20.1 per cent or one-fifth of its 1950 population. This is a severe decline and must be viewed with concern. The median age for the state increased 1.1 years between 1950 and 1960. The median age for Pawnee County increased 6.4 years during this period. In 1960 the median age for Pawnee County was 7.3 years above the average for the rest of the state. ...Both the under-18 group and the 18-64 age groups conbined are 6.3 per cent below the average for the state and the 65 and over age group is 6.4 per cent above the average for the state.[1]

Family income data for Pawnee County are also out of line with state family income figures. County residents earn, on the average, $1,040 less annual income ($3,580) compared to the state average of $4,620. In addition, Pawnee County is 11.2 per cent above the state average for families with income under $3,000.

An Indian manpower survey in Pawnee County taken in 1966 hints at the relative economic standing of the Pawnee Indians:

> Most of the Indians surveyed were Pawnee; however, other Indian groups represented were Otoe, Sac and Fox, Seminole, Cherokee and Wichita. The 230 Indians included in the survey consisted of 110 who were 16 years old

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[1] The Comprehensive Plan: Pawnee County, Norman, Oklahoma: Community Planners, 1968, pp. 102-103.

and over and 120 children. The total surveyed was equal to 41% of the 1960 Indian population....[1]

The characteristics of the 110 Indians 16 years of age and older are described in Table I.

The 1966 incomes of the 110 Indians 16 years of age and older are described in Table I. Income included wages, self-employment, rental and royalty, retirement, social security, and welfare. In 1967, three were employed who had received no 1966 income, and two with income in 1966 had no 1967 income.[2]

More detailed information on education, employment, marital status and number of children can be seen on Table II. Forty-four per cent completed 9-11 years of schooling. Forty per cent were unemployed, a percentage that did not include the out of labor force which consists of people not working because of school, keeping house, age, health, etc.

In the Indian Income Survey, 64 per cent of the families were below the County median family income of $3,580. Approximately three-fourths of the Indian families surveyed were below the State median family income of $4,620.[3]

Employment opportunities for Indians in Pawnee range from sub-professional jobs to skilled and semi-skilled labor. Some adults work outside of the community in adjacent towns such as Stillwater and Tulsa. A few Indian women work in service type jobs or government funded occupations. One of three teacher aides in the elementary school is an Indian woman.

In 1966 the unemployed represented 6.6 per cent of the total County work force. The unemployment figure still held in 1969 despite signs of expanding industrial and recreational development in the County.

In 1968 Pawnee attracted a $1,000,000 hosiery mill to locate in the city. At peak employment the mill will hire approximately 500 people, with 70 per cent of the mill's work force being women. Currently the labor composition is made up of younger people. Fourteen or fifteen Indians are on the payroll but peak employment

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[1] Economic Base Report, Pawnee County, October, 1967, pp. 50-52.

[2] Ibid.

[3] State and County income information was from 1960 data whereas Indian Survey data were obtained in 1966. The income discrepancy is probably even greater given inflationary tendencies during the six-year interval.

TABLE I

INDIAN INCOME, PAWNEE COUNTY*

Income for 1966	Family Income		Individual Income	
Total	% of Total	Total	Male	Female
$ 1-499	7.1	4	6	12
500-999	8.9	5	3	10
1,000-1,499	12.5	7	7	7
1,500-1,999	10.7	6	4	5
2,000-2,499	8.9	5	4	1
2,500-2,999	8.9	5	2	1
3,000-3,499	7.1	4	3	1
3,500-3,999	5.4	3	3	2
4,000-4,999	14.3	8	6	2
5,000-Over	16.2	9	6	1
Total:	100.0	56	44	42

*Source: Economic Base Report, Pawnee County, October, 1967, pp. 50-52.

TABLE II

SPECIAL INDIAN SURVEY
PAWNEE COUNTY*

Grouping	% of Total	Total
TOTAL: 110 (over 16 Years of Age)	100.0	110
EDUCATION COMPLETED		
0-6 Years	7.3	8
7-8	10.9	12
9-11	43.6	48
12 (High School)	28.2	31
13-Over (College)	10.0	11
EMPLOYMENT		
Employed	40.0	44
Unemployed		
1-14 Weeks	5.5	6
15-Over Weeks	6.4	7
New Entrant to Labor Force	3.6	4
Out of Labor Force		
School	16.4	18
Other	28.1	31
MARITAL STATUS		
Married	61.8	68
Single	28.2	31
Other	10.0	11
HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD	50.9	56
CHILDREN (Total 120)		
0-5 Years	32.5	39
6-12 Years	51.7	62
13-15 Years	15.8	19

*Source: Economic Base Report, Pawnee County, October 1967, pp. 50-52.

has not been achieved. Starting pay begins with minimum wage figures and goes up.

Community residents point with pride to the successful effort they waged in attracting this outside industry, which was originally intended for a nearby Oklahoma community.

City residents passed a one per cent city sales tax by a 12 to one margin to guarantee $800,000 in revenue bonds for industrial development. Pawnee leaders are hopeful they will attract another industry to locate in the community in the near future. Approximately $150,000 in revenue bonds are available as inducement.

The Pawnee tribe has designated certain of their lands east of the city as an industrial park for possible industrial expansion (see Map 2). The Pawnee Indian Industrial Tract is made up of 585 acres, served by hard surfaced roads and all utilities. Full development of the industrial park land is restricted by virtue of BIA control of land disposition.

The principal industry for Pawnee and environs is livestock raising (grazing). The city boasts one of the five largest cattle auction centers in the state.

White residents in Pawnee speak with pride of the fact that the community has one of the state's widely advertised tourist attractions in the form of Pawnee Bill Museum and State Park, located on the western edge of the city. Pawnee Bill, whose real name was Major Gordon W. Lillie, toured the country in the early twentieth century as a "wild west" showman with a troupe of two hundred horses and three hundred men and women including many Pawnee Indians. Pawnee Bill's mansion, now a museum, was built on land purchased from Chief Blue Hawk on Blue Hawk peak. His $100,000 home was constructed of buff-colored native stone and red tile. The home is full of antiques and mementoes of Pawnee Bill's life. The state has been generous in appropriating monies to refurbish the mansion and grounds adjacent to the home.

Local White leaders have encouraged the Pawnee Indians to house many of their tribal artifacts in the museum. To date these efforts have not been successful. There is some feeling among tribal members that the museum represents a subtle form of cultural and economic exploitation designed to benefit the White community.[1]

A major attraction for many Pawnee Indians and other townspeople is the annual Pawnee Indian Homecoming (Pow Wow), a four-day

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[1]Recently the Pawnee Chamber of Commerce has been searching for a member of the Pawnee Indian tribe who recalls how old Pawnee sod houses were constructed in order to build one for the Pawnee Bill museum.

celebration in early July. Many Pawnee from all over the United States return home to renew tribal ties. Many neighboring Indian groups also participate in the Pawnee festivities. Pow Wow activities are held on city-owned athletic fields, land formerly owned by the Pawnee Indians. Attendance at the 1969 Homecoming by Pawnee Indians and other Indian families represented the largest gathering in its 14-year history.

The economic base of Pawnee appears to be sound. The city does have a fairly high unemployment of over six per cent and continues to lose many young people to larger communities--principally Tulsa and Oklahoma City. Some industrial expansion is promising for the stability and perhaps expansion of the work force, although agriculture continues to provide the economic base for the county. Retail business is strong in Pawnee with some evidence of inflation. Several leaders spoke of the fact that there was a fairly high turnover in retail establishments as well as private property. In recent months, the community lost a lomber yard and a chain grocery store. Interest and publicity in Pawnee seems to center on the attracting of new industry and tourism, associated with the Pawnee Bill Museum along with the Pawnee Indian Pow Wow. The Pawnee Indians on the basis of the Indian survey data appear to be marginal to the main economic activities of the community. Hopefully, with industrial expansion, Pawnee Indians will find greater job opportunities in the work force. White sentiment seems to support the importance of the Indian to the local economy. However, the issue may be one of eliciting Indian cultural contributions for the good of the community, which happens to be generally defined as a White man's community.

Services and Programs

A Bureau of Indian Affairs office, attached to the area office in Anadarko, is located in Pawnee. The Agency office serves the Pawnee, Oto, Ponca, Tonkawa and Kaw Indian tribes. The BIA office employs approximately 24 people with an annual payroll in excess of $153,000.[1]

The United States Public Health Service Indian Hospital is located just east of Pawnee on the Pawnee Indian Agency grounds (see Map 2). This two-story stone building with adjoining nurses'

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[1]The Pawnee Agency has approximately 88,000 acres of Indian trust land under its jurisdiction, with one-quarter of the land in Pawnee County. Before the turn of the century, Pawnee tribal members were allotted 113,700 acres of land primarily in Pawnee County. Today about one-fourth of the allotted lands are owned by members of the tribe.

quarters serves the Indian population north from Shawnee to the state line and east to Claremore. The hospital has 32 beds and six bassinets. Over 25 people are employed by the hospital with an annual payroll in excess of $174,000.

The Pawnee-Noble County Community Action Foundation, Incorporated, is headquartered in Pawnee in a building located on Indian Agency grounds east of the city. The CAP center has conducted several fairly successful programs including the rural small business development center, summer Head Start program in Pawnee and adjacent communities. A Health and Planning program has been successful in working with many low income families in providing birth control information, environmental control problems and nutritional needs. About 190 people have been served so far in this program.[1]

Education

The public schools in Pawnee consist of an elementary school, a junior high school, and a high school. In 1968-1969, a total of 972 were enrolled in grades Kindergarten through 12. Of this number, 21 per cent were Indian, 8 per cent Negro, and 72 per cent White (Table I).

The elementary school, built in 1942, is of buff stone construction. It is located on "the hill" two blocks south of the main business district. Grades I through 6 are located in this building. Due to over-crowding, kindergarten classes are held in an Indian Agency building located east of town, leased from the BIA.

The main elementary school building occupies approximately one-third of a city block and includes a small, temporary wooden building adjoining the school on the rear. Several classes are conducted in this wooden structure along with the school lunch program. The playground area is fairly large, roughly two-thirds of the city block, with a small amount of playground equipment in proportion to school children and play area. Lack of asphalt playground surface creates some custodial unhappiness when the grounds are muddy, since youngsters track sand and mud into the building.

Twenty teachers are employed in the elementary school, four

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[1]The CAP director indicated that Indians are restricted from participating in the Health and Planning program due to the fact that the Indian hospital is available to serve their needs in matters of birth control information, etc.

TABLE III

PAWNEE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL ENROLLMENT
(1968-1969)*

Grade	White			Negro			Indian		
	B	G	Total	B	G	Total	B	G	Total
Kg.	23	28	51	4	2	6	6	7	13
1	24	20	44	1	3	4	14	4	18
2	27	28	55	6	1	7	10	6	16
3	26	23	49	5	2	7	9	8	17
4	37	23	60	3	5	8	7	10	17
5	23	26	49	3	0	3	9	10	19
6	25	25	50	4	3	7	8	3	11
7	26	23	49	2	3	5	12	8	20
8	41	27	68	3	5	8	8	12	20
9	33	20	53	5	0	5	3	15	18
10	31	27	58	5	5	10	6	8	14
11	35	28	63	2	1	3	8	6	14
12	20	20	40	2	1	3	5	5	10
Total:			689			76			207
% of Total (n=972)			72			8			21

*Source: Pawnee Public Schools

above State aid compensation, along with three teacher aides. Pawnee has two certified reading specialists: one in the elementary grades and one in the junior high school.

Elementary school curriculum innovations in the last five years include: physical education program; remedial reading; teacher aides; kindergarten classes; and a federally-funded breakfast program which was initiated in February, 1969. A high percentage of the Indian children are enrolled in the school lunch program.

Two blocks further up "the hill" from the grade school are the junior and senior high schools. The distinction between junior and senior high seems to be nominal, since the two buildings adjoin one another. Both schools have separate libraries, which are staffed by different people. Both libraries have enlarged book holdings due largely to federal funds available for this purpose. The librarians are aware that holdings related to Indian heritage are weak, but are in the process of enlarging the collection. The junior high librarian also acts in the capacity of a reading specialist for the hunior high students.

Band rooms for the high school are located in the junior high building. Noise (or music) from band practice has a tendency to be disruptive of classes held in the building. Acoustical tile has been used in the band room, but without much effect.

The junior high principal also handles matters related to Federal Title programs affecting the school. These duties include grant applications, school enrollment data for State and Federal programs, and certification signatures solicited from Indian parents regarding youngsters in the public school program.[1]

The senior high school building is quite attractive in arrangement and appears to be functional in use of space. The school superintendent and senior high principal occupy offices facing each other in the entrance hall.

The senior high principal spoke highly of the remedial reading program. He indicated that the public seemed to be more appreciative of this innovation than of any other thing the school has. A language program has recently been started, with Spanish as the initial language. Both the principal and the superintendent were in agreement that the school needed to initiate a vocational-trade education for interested students. Such trades as cosme-

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[1]The junior high principal probably has more sustained contact with Indian parents than any other public school official. Among his duties, gaining adult signatures on federal forms brings him into contact with Indian parents.

tology, auto mechanics and sheet metal skills would meet a real need for many youngsters. The superintendent felt there was a wide area of concern in the community for a special education program. One of the difficulties mentioned was finding a qualified teacher(s) for such a program.

The superintendent spoke with some amusement over the fact that "community support for the school program 'seemed' to be related to the success or failure of the school athletic teams. When the basketball and football teams are doing well, community support also seems to be forthcoming for academic programs." Athletics appears to be one area of the school program where Indian youth excel and are treated as equals. Several Indian youngsters were regulars on the 1968-69 basketball varsity.[1]

Approximately 30 teachers are employed in the junior and senior high schools. Starting salary for a new teacher (1969-70) begins at $5,200. A teacher with 15 years of teaching experience and a Master's degree can make $8,500. Teachers get $25 salary increments up to $400 for local initiative. Many teachers find it difficult to locate housing in Pawnee and end up commuting from nearby communities. Rental housing in Pawnee tends to be substandard with top rent at about $80 per month. Pawnee has many older people, including retired and single people, occupying small homes in the community. One school administrator thought that the local school board, composed of five locally-elected residents, would probably establish a policy in the near future stipulating that teachers must live in the local community.

Thirteen buses are used to transport children who live in the surrounding country and four additional buses are held in reserve for school activities. The marshalling of buses before and after school is a significant sight in the daily routine of the community. Many Indian parents mention the bussing program as a positive aspect of the school activities, since it provided transportation to school for their children.

Several organized groups in the community use the school facilities for their meeting place at a minimal charge. These groups include:(1) town team basketball in the high school gymnasium; (2) the Indian Baptist Church uses the high school gym for their basketball games; (3) a Neighborhood Youth Corps program; (4) an extension class from Oklahoma State University meets in the high school building.

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[1]One known misunderstanding did arise during the 1968-69 school year when an Indian girl was selected as an attendant to serve in the "court" of a "queen" who happened to be a white girl. Personal animosity between the two girls was apparently resolved.

The school program seems to be well integrated into the life of the white community. Indians and Negroes, however, do not have representation on the school board, teaching staff or administrative staff.[1] School officials indicate a genuine desire to hire minority group members to the staff. They are not, however, optimistic about the chances of doing so.

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[1]An Indian did run for a recent local school board vacancy (1969). His educational qualifications were significant (held a Masters degree) in contrast to the credentials of his white opponent. The local newspaper gave extended coverage to the white candidate, who won handily.

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